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SUBJECT: ANKARA MEDIA REACTION REPORT
MONDAY, JUNE 4, 2007

In Today's Papers

Center-Right Merger Fails

All papers report that the DYP and Anavatan (ANAP) merger failed when the two center-right parties failed to reach compromise on the nomination list of candidates for the general elections. ANAP did not disband itself and current leader Erkan Mumcu was re-elected as the party chairman on the second day of the convention. Mumcu apologized to the Turkish people for not being able to realize the merger and accused DYP of not keeping its promises. Weekend papers report that Mumcu's sharp criticism of former party leader Mesut Yilmaz caused turmoil in the party and many party members resigned from ANAP. Meanwhile, DYP leader Agar who had planned to attend the ANAP convention, decided not to after learning of Mumcu's decision. DYP will retain the name of the intended new party -- the Democrat Party (DP) -- and candidates will run under that banner in the elections.

Rice, Gates, Kurdish Leaders on Turkey-Iraq Relations

All papers report that following the warnings of Secretary Rice, Secretary of Defense Robert Gates on Sunday cautioned Turkey not to

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use force in northern Iraq. "The Turks have a genuine concern with Kurdish terrorism that takes place on Turkish soil. We have been working with the Turks to try to help them get control of this problem on Turkish soil," Gates said. "We have had ongoing discussions with Turkish officials," Gates noted, adding, "General Ralston is our envoy to Turkey and he continues to be deeply engaged."

Meanwhile, papers report the regional Kurdish administration president Massoud Barzani met with Iraqi President Jalal Talabani in Dokan in Suleymaniye. Talabani expressed hope after the meeting that "problems with our brothers, the Turks, will be resolved," adding "we do not accept interference in others' affairs and we do not accept interference in our affairs." Barzani said they have

always called for dialogue with Turkey. "Turkey has not entered the Iraqi side of the border. Bombs have fallen on some remote border areas, but it's not an issue of concern. If a cross-border operation is launched, it will become Iraq's problem," Barzani emphasized.

Editorial Commentary on Northern Iraq, US and Turkey Relations
Washington-based Yasemin Congar writes in the mainstream daily Milliyet: "The Bush administration considers the trilateral mechanism between Baghdad, Ankara and Washington as the proper platform for cooperation against the PKK in Northern Iraq. In this context, Washington wants Turkey to maintain a high level dialogue with the Kurdistan Regional Administration (KRA). Both Republicans and Democrats are pursuing the same line on this issue which envisions a solution through political dialogue between Ankara and KRA on every issue, including Kirkuk. So the elimination of Turkey's worries regarding Northern Iraq require close and healthy ties between Turkey and the KRA, however it seems difficult at this point given the current domestic political tiffs in Turkey and some threatening remarks made by Kurdish leaders. Yet the fact of the matter is not only the US and Kurds but also the Iraqi government itself is asking Turkey to maintain close ties with the KRA. The Iraqi gjQQ4"NV[0| more a venue for expressing fury against PKK terrorism and

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the government for not solving the problem. The US should realize that following the general elections, the political scene will not be the same as before. Popular fury should be taken into account because there is a tendency to equate the PKK with the US. The US currently emerges as a force which helps the ruling AKP as an example of moderate Islam and watches out for the PKK in northern Iraq. None of those political approaches will do any good for the US. Flirting with Islamism and courting terror are dead ends for US interests after all."

Osman Ocalan Missing

Vatan, Cumhuriyet and Aksam report that Osman Ocalan, the brother of Abdullah Ocalan and a founding member of the PKK, has been missing in Iraq for one week. Vatan and Aksam speculate Ocalan went to Iran for medical treatment but was taken into custody by Iranian officials. Cumhuriyet claims Ocalan wanted to flee to Iran after hearing he would be handed over to Turkey, but was captured at the border. The paper expects Ocalan to be handed over to Turkey by Barzani as a "gesture" to reduce strains with Turkey before the upcoming general elections.

Mesrob II Remarks on the Assassination of Hrant Dink

Mainstream Hurriyet reports that in an interview with Der Spiegel's Internet website, Patriarch of Turkish Armenians, Mesrob II said that those behind the assassination of Hrant Dink are being protected and he will take the issue to TGS Chief General Buyukanit soon. Mesrob added that the Armenians in Istanbul are continuously threatened and their request for security measures from the Istanbul Governor's office was rejected with the recommendation that they hire private security companies.

TV News:

(NTV, 8 A.M.)

Domestic News

- Turkey-EU troika meeting will take place in Ankara with the participation of German and Portuguese foreign ministers and EU Enlargement Commissioner Olli Rehn.
- The Turkish Parliament has approved a bill that would increase the powers of the police.
- The Turkish Parliament recessed on Sunday, June 3, to convene five days after the High Election Board announces the results of the general elections to be held on July 22.
- On Monday, Land Forces Commander Ilker Basbug is to kick off an official visit to the Chinese capital of Beijing.

International News

- President Putin warned that US plans to build a missile defense system in eastern Europe would force Moscow to target its missiles against Europe.
- Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni has invited the foreign ministers of Jordan and Egypt to visit Israel for talks on an Arab plan offering Israel a peace deal.
- More than 300 police were injured during protests in the German city of Rostock on Saturday against the upcoming Group of Eight (G8) summit in Germany.
- Fourteen American soldiers were killed in three days in Iraq, the US military said Sunday.

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